CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

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BURMA, EGYPT, ETHIOPIA, MEXICO, MOROCCO,
NIGERIA, SWEDEN and YUGOSLAVIA

Memorandum

The delegations of Burma, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Sweden and Yugoslavia deem it appropriate, at the outset of the 12th year of the existence of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, to state the following

1. They consider that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, which is the main multilateral negotiating body for disarmament, is of fundamental importance to the United Nations and the world community.

2. They also consider that the present international political situation is favourable for achieving further concrete results in the field of disarmament measures, adhering to the priorities established in the provisional agenda of the Committee and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly.

3. Conscious of the responsibilities of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to mankind and to the United Nations, they are increasingly concerned by the lack of tangible progress in the solution of the main disarmament problems entrusted to the Committee - a situation which became apparent during its last session and which the meetings of the present session have so far confirmed.

4. While stressing that it is the duty of all members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to contribute positively to the work of the Committee, it is their firm belief that primary responsibility rests with the two States which have been exercising jointly the chairmanship of the Committee and which also possess, to an overwhelmingly greater degree, nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

5. While reiterating their view that it is most desirable that all nuclear-weapon States participate in the disarmament negotiations, they also reaffirm their opinion that the non-participation of two of those States in the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament should not prevent the Committee from discharging its obligations.

6. It is their conviction that there is no reason which may justify any stagnation of the Committee's work and the current absence of effective negotiations, especially in the case of the following two questions, concerning which the

United Nations General Assembly has repeatedly requested the Committee to deal with as matters of "first" or "high" priority

(a) Cessation of all nuclear-weapon tests, in conformity with the preamble to the Treaty banning nuclear-weapon tests in the athmosphere, in outer space and under water, and

(b) Effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and the elimination of such weapons from military arsenals of all States, as agreed upon in article IX of the Convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons and on their destruction.

Negotiations in the current phase of the work of the Committee should, therefore, concentrate on the most important questions related to nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and not on less pressing matters.

7. In the light of the preceding considerations, they believe that it is the duty of all States members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to contribute positively to the progress of the work of the Committee and urge the two States referred to in paragraph 4 above to take the required decisions and necessary measures, including the submission of specific proposals, in order that both the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the solemn undertakings assumed in the preamble of the partial test ban Treaty and in article IX of the Convention on the elimination of biological and toxin weapons, may begin to receive effective implementation.